

Riverside General Plan Program

Education Subcommittee Meeting Thursday, April 15, 2004

On Thursday, April 15, 2004, the City of Riverside General Plan Program Education Subcommittee met for its last regular meeting in the 3rd floor conference room of Riverside City Hall. Attendees were:

Education Subcommittee Members

Gayne Anacker for Dr. Jonathan Parker, California Baptist University
Judith Auth, Riverside Public Library
Mike Fine, Riverside Unified School District
D. Jock Fischer, Riverside County Office of Education
Paul Jessup, Alvord Unified School District
Gloria A. Lopez for Dr. Ella Simmons, La Sierra University
Vincent Moses, Municipal Museum
Robert Nava, University of California, Riverside
Jim Parsons for Virginia MacDonald, Riverside City College
Jim Walters, Riverside Police Department

City Staff

Ken Gutierrez, Planning Director
Craig Aaron, Principal Planner
Diane Jenkins, Senior Planner
Patricia Brenes, Associate Planner

Consultant

John Cook, Cotton/Bridges/Associates

Following introductions, John Cook started the meeting with a description of the General Plan program as a whole and described the unique role of the Education Element. This role was summarized by Director Gutierrez during the meeting: the City wants to use the Education Element to help integrate the missions of the various agencies, including school districts, the library, museums, and the Police Department to meet a number of Citywide goals. He noted that education is being broadly interpreted to encompass job skills, economic development programs, safe routes to school, as well as many other aspects more traditionally under the umbrella of education.

Cook stated that staff was reviewing drafts of most other General Plan elements and that the goal of today's meeting was to receive feedback from subcommittee members on the draft Education Element.

The following is a summary of comments received during the meeting.

General Content/Structure

- The previous General Plan included more measurable goals/policies, including quantifiable standards applicable to schools and libraries; the less-specific objectives/policies in draft Education Element may be too permissive. (Cook noted

that some of these standards may be in Infrastructure Element; the Education Element should include cross-references to Infrastructure where appropriate.)

- Suggestion that each school district fold its mission statement into the draft.
- Possible additional objectives:
 - Increase the number of K-12 students going into secondary education; use the graduation rate as an important community benchmark.
 - Seek to keep college graduates in Riverside after graduation.
 - create an environment attractive to higher education.
- Include or cross-reference statistics from the Husing report; greater specificity will make the document more actionable.

What's Missing

- Gage and Chemawa Middle Schools not shown on map of schools
- UCR and La Sierra's outreach programs not adequately documented
- UCR's future plans for growth and new professional schools need to be discussed

Other Comments

- Some areas of City (Arlanza in particular) lacking safe routes to school
- Police Department supports increasing the number of school crossing guards at locations where warranted
- References to the Joint Use Committee might be better as implementation tools

In response to several comments that there should be relatively consistent information about each of the schools and education institutions, subcommittee members from the school districts, the colleges and universities, the library, museum, and police department committed to provide planning staff with additional information no later than April 23, 2004. Cook stated that this information need not be formal and that it should be emailed, phoned or faxed to Diane Jenkins in the Planning Department (dijenkins@riversideca.gov; 909-826-5625).

At the conclusion of the meeting, the consultant and staff thanked subcommittee members for their participation and encouraged them to publicize the upcoming Citizens' Congress.